



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Roxane Marquez at (213) 974-4111 (office)
or (213) 598-5463 (cellular)

GLORIA MOLINA ANNOUNCES NEWLY NAMED 'GRAND PARK' TO OPEN THIS SUMMER

Music Center Tapped to Manage Grand Park Operations and Programming

LOS ANGELES (May 29, 2012)—Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina officially announced today that the newly named, \$54 million Grand Park will open to the public later this summer – and that the Music Center, tapped by the Board of Supervisors to manage Grand Park, will be responsible for all operations and programming for an initial period of three years.

“Grand Park will make our Civic Center bloom,” Molina said. “In a sea of concrete, Grand Park will be a welcome urban oasis. At twelve acres, it is one of the biggest parks in all of Los Angeles – and right in the heart of downtown. Of all the Grand Avenue Project components, this is the one I fought for the hardest and of which I am proudest because a park is a true public treasure everyone can enjoy.”

Grand Park is also an example of smart public policy. When projects conceived by the Grand Avenue Committee began moving forward, Molina – a voting committee member – insisted that any developer ultimately awarded the Grand Avenue contract commit to providing \$54 million upfront toward park completion. While other elements of the Grand Avenue Project have slowed, Grand Park construction has proceeded uninterrupted – even after a global economic crash of historic proportions.

Grand Park stretches from Grand Avenue on the west to City Hall on the east, with its northern border at Temple Street and its southern border at First Street. Construction began in July of 2010. Grand Park is expected to open this summer.

—More—

The park is part of the larger Grand Avenue Project – and, between the Los Angeles County Courthouse and the county's Hall of Administration, it includes a completely renovated Arthur J. Will Memorial Fountain. Grand Park also will feature smaller lawns, gardens, and groves designed for more intimate gatherings – including a larger event lawn directly in front of City Hall. A three-quarter mile promenade loop will encircle the entire park as smaller walking paths meander through magnificent garden settings. Additional amenities include new lighting, restrooms, multilingual directional signage, and a new Starbucks.

For Grand Park's first year, the Music Center will handle all maintenance, operations, public programming, and private party leases under the guidance of the Grand Park Advisory Board – which will include one appointee from each county supervisor's office; one appointee from each relevant Los Angeles City Council district; and one appointee from the county's Chief Executive Office. By July of 2013, the Grand Park Advisory Board is expected to evolve to 501(c)3 status and operate the park on behalf of the county.

"We are honored to have been selected by the Board of Supervisors to manage Grand Park," said Howard Sherman, chief operating officer for the Music Center. "We embrace the role with great enthusiasm for what we know will be one of Los Angeles' most dynamic outdoor destinations. As the Music Center's 'front yard,' Grand Park gives us the opportunity to have a new space in which to offer entertainment in a completely new way. The Music Center will ensure that Grand Park is an inclusive environment with a breadth of events and activities that are perfect for an outdoor setting and offer something for everyone to enjoy."

More details about Grand Park – including renderings and photos – can be found online at **grandpark.lacounty.gov**. For more information about the Music Center, go to **www.musiccenter.org**.

Under contract with Los Angeles County since opening in 1964, the Music Center and its four resident companies bring the county highly compelling performance arts engagements and public events. The Music Center is also responsible for the operations and guest services for the Music Center's four venues. In 2000, the Music Center expanded to become a presenter of both dance and participatory arts programming, and continues its longstanding role in advocating for and directly providing arts education in schools throughout Los Angeles County.

Background on Molina's environmental history: Today's action is just the latest park improvement spearheaded by Molina during her tenure on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. Since taking office in February of 1991, her major parks-related achievements include (but are not limited to):

- Leading the Los Angeles River Master Plan efforts for Los Angeles County—which required coordination between the county and 60 cities—resulting in a blueprint for parks, trails, and open spaces along the river. This required establishing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County and the City of Los Angeles to expedite projects, share resources, and swap information in order to complete river revitalization projects on-time and on-budget. In addition, Sup. Gloria Molina supplied \$5 million in Proposition A/Open Space Assessment District funds to develop the following parks along the river:
 - Cudahy River Park in Cudahy
 - Marsh Park in the Los Angeles' Elysian Valley neighborhood
 - Maywood Riverfront Park in Maywood
 - The Los Angeles River Center in Los Angeles' Elysian Valley neighborhood
- Leading the San Gabriel River Master Plan efforts for Los Angeles County—including the effort to “green” the Emerald Necklace along the San Gabriel River and the Rio Hondo in partnership with the non-profit organization Amigos de los Rios—resulting in the creation of the following new parks and open spaces:
 - El Encanto Wilderness Park in Azusa
 - The Arrow Highway Gateway in Azusa and the Arrow Gateway Bike Rest in Irwindale
 - Lario Creek in Azusa/Irwindale
 - Arroyo Seco Park in El Monte
 - Gibson Park in El Monte
 - San Jose Creek Habitat and Trails Restoration in Avocado Heights
 - The Woodland Duck Farm in Bassett (in progress)
 - Lashbrook Park in South El Monte
 - Thienes Avenue Gateway in South El Monte
 - El Bosque del Rio Hondo located within the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area in South El Monte
 - The San Gabriel River Discovery Center (in progress) in South El Monte
 - The Rio Hondo Spreading Grounds (which includes the three-mile El Paseo del Rio bikeway) and the San Gabriel River Spreading Grounds in Pico Rivera.

- Creating the following new parks within the First District using both state and local funds:
 - Avenue Park in Avocado Heights (which features play equipment for children living with disabilities)
 - Clara St. Park in Cudahy
 - El Parque de los Sueños in East Los Angeles (which features play equipment for children living with disabilities)
 - El Parque Nuestro in Florence-Firestone
 - Vista Hermosa park in downtown Los Angeles
- Financing numerous improvements to First District parks, including:
 - A new gym at City Terrace Park in East Los Angeles.
 - Major upgrades throughout the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area in South El Monte.
 - Lifeguard facilities at the Santa Fe Dam Recreational Area.
 - A new senior center at Valleydale Park in Azusa and Roosevelt Park in Florence-Firestone.
 - Substantial upgrades (plus new play equipment) at Avocado Heights Park in La Puente, Bassett Park in Avocado Heights, Dalton Park in Azusa, Martin Park in West Valinda, Rimgrove Park in Valinda, Sunshine Park in East Valinda, and Belvedere, Obregon, Salazar, and Saybrook Parks in East Los Angeles. (Obregon Park now features a jogging path made entirely from recycled tires—the first in the county's park system.)
 - Major renovations to Mayberry Park in South Whittier including a new park irrigation system, new children's play equipment, new gym flooring, a new multi-purpose building, new security lighting, and expanded programming for youth and seniors such as Tiny Tots classes, a youth mariachi program, computer classes, women's and senior aerobics classes, senior lunch programs, and field trips for seniors and families.
 - Major renovations to Sorensen Park in West Whittier including an additional baseball field, three picnic shade structures, new play equipment, new barbecue braziers, new security lighting, a new roof for the community building, a new air conditioning system for the Tiny Tot building, a rebuilt trellis in the courtyard, a restored basketball court, and a new paint job as well as additional programming for youth and seniors such as an expanded Tiny Tots, after-school, and computer programs.
 - New recreational equipment, a new computer, and field trips to Los Angeles County art museums and health fairs for seniors living at Los Nietos Senior Manor in West Whittier.
- Improving El Bosque del Rio Hondo by restoring the natural area to its original form and linking the park with the San Gabriel Valley regional trail system.
- Directing 2009 American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds—commonly known as “stimulus funds”—toward significant landscaping and capital improvements at Mayberry Park in South Whittier and Roosevelt Park in Florence-Firestone.
- Using Workforce Investment Act funds (which are part of the 2009 American Recovery & Reinvestment Act [ARRA] monies) to prevent staff from the Dept. of Parks & Recreation from losing their jobs.
- Keeping all First District county parks and pools open—and Dept. of Parks & Recreation programming ongoing—during the 1995 and 2002 fiscal crises, particularly since public parks and community centers serve as *de facto* after-school programs for local youth and are a key component of the First District's anti-gang strategy.
- Preventing over 18,376 plastic bags from clogging Los Angeles County landfills and polluting waterways through the Green Bag for a Clean Earth program which motivates grammar school students in First District unincorporated areas to use canvas bags instead of plastic bags while grocery shopping.
- Constructing Fitness Zones at 11 county parks throughout the First District.

- Opening skate parks at Belvedere Park in East Los Angeles—featuring the second deepest skate bowl in the State of California—and at Bassett Park in Avocado Heights, featuring five ramps, a grind grill, and a quarter-pike ramp.
- Hosting “The Greening Institute” to help non-profit organizations and nearby cities develop new “pocket parks” throughout the First District.
- Completely landscaping Belvedere Park, restored Belvedere Park Lake in East Los Angeles, and integrated them into the East Los Angeles Civic Center site.
- Renovating the Atlantic Park and Salazar Park Pools in East Los Angeles.
- Installing “splash pads”—which are interactive water play areas on a rubber, non-slip surface where water sprays from structures or ground sprayers and then is immediately drained away, making it safe for children of all ages—at:
 - Atlantic Park in East Los Angeles
 - City Terrace Park in East Los Angeles
 - Mayberry Park in South Whittier
 - Sorensen Park in West Whittier
 - Ringrove Park in Valinda
 - Martin Park in West Valinda
 - Basset Park in Avocado Heights
 - Dalton Park and Valleydale Park in Azusa
 - San Angelo Park in Avocado Heights
- Developing the Valinda Avenue Greenway in Valinda, a picturesque pathway featuring curved bands of native plants growing alongside a granite trail and an evergreen hedge stretching down the pathway as it abuts adjacent homes.
- Transforming Yorbita Rd. in unincorporated Valinda from a blighted dirt path into a picturesque walkway through a \$150,000 investment of county funds.
- Transforming an alleyway adjacent to Graham Elementary School in Florence-Firestone into a beautiful walking path complete with new shrubs and vines.
- Supplying Proposition A grants for improvements to parks in the First District cities of Bell Gardens, Cudahy, El Monte, Huntington Park, South El Monte, and South Gate.
- Waiving lighting fees for baseball leagues to allow children to play longer and in a safe environment.
- Expanding after-school computer programs at community centers located in all First District parks.
- Funding summer swim programs at Pioneer and Bassett High Schools.
- Making upgrades to Shyre Park in Bassett for the Bassett Little League
- Successfully helping stop the consideration of a new power plant in the City of Vernon.
- Supporting the hosting of the Renaissance Pleasure Faire at the Santa Fe Dam since the Spring of 2007.

###